

Feb. 19, 2016

To: Government, Administration and Elections Committee (GAE)

From: Mrs. Cheryl Dwyer, 774B Poodatook Lane, Stratford, Ct. 06614

RE: HB 5050, An Act Concerning Modernizing Parking Signs for People with Disabilities.

To Whom It May Concern:

I am writing this letter to urge your support and vote for the change of logo and wording on Handicapped parking signs.

I lost my entire leg very suddenly when I was sixteen years of age. I was an active "typical" teenager. And then one day... I wasn't. One of the hardest things for me through the years has been the use of the word, "handicapped." I never considered myself handicapped, and yet, that is the word used. For years I struggled without a handicapped sticker for parking because I couldn't bear to hang the sign up in my car and be labeled as a "handicapped individual."

I went to college, became a teacher and then a principal in Connecticut. I retired with 37 years of joyful experience. I use a cane and walking is much more difficult these days. But I am not handicapped! I have a disability and I live with it.

To many it may seem like such a silly unnecessary change. To me, it is extremely significant. The sign as it currently lives, is a constant slap in the face to myself and those individuals with disabilities who work so hard to fight through their limitations and live life to the fullest.

Please give your deepest consideration of this bill. When I saw this bill up for consideration I truly started to cry. I think mainly because I was embarrassed that it took someone else to bring this issue forward and not me. I am a bit ashamed.

I will be out of town on Monday otherwise I would be in Hartford to speak out. I would be most willing to discuss this issue further with anyone interested in doing so. I can be reached on my cell at 860-309-0392.

Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

Cheryl Dwyer

